

*Remembrance Day*

They are too near to be great but our children shall understand when and how our fate was changed and by whose hand.

[*Translation*]

It is good to know that the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of those veterans do indeed appreciate those who changed the fate of a nation. A recent opinion poll found Canadians have an impressive knowledge of what our country accomplished in war and 89 per cent of those polled think it is important to remember what our wartime role was.

[*English*]

They are not alone in that view. An English lady recently sent a letter to our High Commissioner in Great Britain. I want to quote from that letter. She said:

I was 15 years old when the 1939 war broke out and so I am quite well able to remember the immediate and totally generous support which Canada gave to this country 50 years ago.

Writing as one among so many, I can only send those volunteers in all the services from Canada my heartfelt thanks.

On Saturday, let us all add our heartfelt thanks to those who gained so much respect at home and abroad.

**Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception):** Mr. Speaker, as the official opposition critic for veterans affairs, it is my distinct honour today to rise on behalf of my colleagues to pay tribute to the more than 100,000 of our men and women who sacrificed their lives in three wars to make this country free, and to those veterans who survived, as the hon. minister said, and who are still struggling against the pain and the loneliness brought on by this conflict.

In preparing for this tribute today on the seventy-fifth anniversary, and in an effort to convey a feeling for the depth of personal sacrifice and the raw courage involved, I wish to read a short, but very poignant letter that I recently obtained from a family in Newfoundland, and I read it with their permission. It is a letter written to his mother from a young army lieutenant serving in France on the eve of a great battle on August 7, 1918. If the emotion felt is the same that one receives from reading

this kind of letter, I think it will do great justice in helping us remember this occasion today.

Dearest Mother,

This is the evening before the attack and my thoughts are with you all at home, but my backward glance is wistful only because of memories and because of the sorrow which would further darken your lives should anything befall me in tomorrow's fray. Otherwise my eye is fixed on tomorrow with hope for mankind and with visions of a new world. A blow will be struck tomorrow which will definitely mark the turn of the tide. It will be one of a grand series of victories which will humble the selfish and barbarous enemy and will exalt the hearts of those who are suffering for freedom. I have no misgivings for myself in tomorrow's encounter. It does not matter whether I survive or fall. A great triumph is certain, and I shall take part in it. I shall strike a blow for freedom, along with thousands of others who count personal safety as nothing when freedom is at stake. In a few moments I shall make the final address to my men, and shall strengthen their hearts, if they need strengthening, with the language of men at war. We shall strive only to achieve victory. We shall not hold our own lives dear. The hour is all the more dramatic for me because for the first time since I came to France, I am close to the spot consecrated by the blood of our gallant dead. It was here that noble Raymond fell and Joe and Kenneth shed their blood in freedom's cause.

These were his three brothers.

I trust to be as faithful as they.

I do not think for a moment that I shall not return from the field of honour, but in case I should not, give my last blessing to father, and my latest thanks for all he did for me. Give my blessing to my brother Roland and his family and to the others who may survive me.

I have no regrets and no fear of tomorrow. I should not choose to change places with anyone in the world just now, except perhaps General Foch.

How glad I am that at last the hour has come for me to taste vengeance! I shall be my mother's and father's son tomorrow. Again God bless you all.

Your son, Hedley.

Lieutenant Hedley Goodyear, in his early twenties, was killed the following day.

As we witness from the extraordinary surges underway today freedom and peace cannot be addressed just by legislative bodies or by armies. As we have seen in this letter, these are personal matters, to which Remembrance Day is a testimonial and to the attainment of which it is a challenge.

On Saturday, November 11, we will mark our respect by wearing poppies, by attendance at church and memorial services, and parades, and by the laying of wreaths at cenotaphs. Let us remember that because these courageous Canadians conscientiously discharged their duties